

LET'S GET OUT THERE

A guide to making
outdoor activities more
inclusive for women



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FOREWORDS

This Girl Can is all about celebrating women being active in a way that's right for them, and there are so many great ways to get active outdoors.

However, we know that women, particularly from culturally diverse backgrounds, face greater barriers to experiencing and enjoying outdoor spaces – whether it's a lack of access, a lack of representation, not knowing what to expect, a lack of awareness about what's on offer or cultural needs not being met.

So, we've partnered with the excellent Multicultural Marketing Consultancy to develop this toolkit as an important resource for anyone who provides and promotes experiences for women in natural spaces.

This toolkit shares guidance on developing inclusive activities, creating culturally sensitive communications and provides campaign templates and materials to help promote activities. Dotted throughout are case studies highlighting some of the wonderful organisations who are already doing incredible work in this space to tackle barriers and create opportunities for women to get out there and enjoy the benefits.

Kate Peers, Strategic Lead for Campaigns, Sport England

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MMAC

We are Multicultural Marketing Consultancy (MMC), an award-winning agency and recognised pioneer in multicultural communications.

We help organisations connect effectively with multicultural communities. Our objective is to integrate multicultural insights into the things that matter – health, wealth, education and the planet.

So, when we were given the opportunity to develop a toolkit with Sport England to engage, inspire and motivate more Black and Asian Muslim women to use outdoor spaces to get active, we were 'in'.

In putting together this important piece of work, we've listened to our women and undertaken additional research to understand the barriers and the drivers at play. We've also taken time to understand the landscape - what community groups and delivery partners already offer by way of more tailored activity offerings which are reflective of the needs of our women. There is an abundance of best practice already inspiring hundreds, if not thousands, of women up and down the country to use outdoor spaces to get active. What we've seen is that rather than big sweeping reform, often a small, nuanced tweak, or the recruitment of the right activity leader can be the catalyst for change.

The commonality of success stories is that delivery partners have taken the time to really get to know their women, what walks of life they are from, how the cost-of-living crisis has affected their day-to-day, what responsibilities their women may have, what religious and cultural practices are important and within this, what their barriers and drivers to outdoor activity could be. Our women are individuals who have their own life experiences, so by using the insights in this toolkit with the lens of really understanding the women you want to reach, whether it is walking, biking, playing football or rock climbing, we hope that the hints, tips and advice provided here inspire more women to embrace the outdoors.

Patricia Macauley, Founder & Director, MMC

1.0

Introduction

There are many physical and mental health benefits to be gained from spending time in green and blue spaces – from urban parks and canals, to coastal paths and forests.

However, Sport England's Active Lives data has shown that women are more likely than men to be missing out on the benefits of getting active in natural environments. This is due to a wide range of barriers, from difficulty in accessing these spaces, to a lack of experience in what to do or what to expect.

Research by CPRE, the countryside charity, also shows that women from culturally diverse backgrounds face additional barriers to accessing and enjoying outdoor spaces. They may have concerns around whether their cultural needs will be met, or a perception that some outside spaces are 'not for them'.



Driving change

Let's Get Out There is a new campaign from This Girl Can. It's been created with the support of many organisations like yours who have shared insights, experiences and solutions to help more women get active in outdoor spaces.

This campaign marks the start of a collective effort to challenge the barriers women face and ensure they can experience the benefits of getting active outside. To do this effectively, we'll need to:

collaborate with organisations who are already leading the way; and crucially work closely with the women our campaign is trying to engage with.

The opportunity

There are huge benefits to supporting and inspiring more women to get active outdoors.

Women can be inspired to unlock new ways to get active and discover new activities which work for them. And once more women are taking part in outdoor activities, it will become more 'normal' to do so. This will encourage even more women to give it a go and enable those providing the activities to improve and increase provision.

All of this leads to more women experiencing the many benefits of getting active in green and blue spaces – which is good news for all of us.



Who is this guide for?

This guide has been developed for anyone who provides and promotes experiences for women in natural spaces. As the people who make activity happen, you have an amazing opportunity to help make sure outdoor activity is appealing to women from all backgrounds.

Whether you're part of a bigger organisation, or a smaller community-led club or group, this guide will support you in creating an inclusive offering and communicating it effectively to a diverse audience.



“This Girl Can is all about celebrating women being active in a way that’s right for them, and there are so many great ways to get active outdoors.

However, it’s important to recognise that for some women, getting active outdoors may be more difficult, which is why we want to highlight some of the wonderful organisations who are doing such brilliant work in this space to tackle these barriers, creating opportunities to get out there and enjoy the benefits.”

Kate Peers, Strategic Lead for Campaigns

1.1 HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This guide has been created to provide you with practical guidance so you can encourage more women from culturally diverse backgrounds, especially Black women and Asian Muslim women, to take part in outdoor activities.

You can use this guide to:

- equip you and your workforce with greater cultural knowledge and increase your understanding
- facilitate discussions about some of the barriers women from culturally diverse backgrounds face when it comes to participating in outdoor activities
- inform small changes you could make to new or existing activities, to ensure these are more accessible for all women
- see ideas around how you can generate interest in your activities, through developing and communicating the right messaging.

There's a wealth of detail, but this section provides a summary and signposting to various parts of the toolkit, so you can easily find the information you're after.

The following pages will get you started with 7 simple steps you can take. These are:

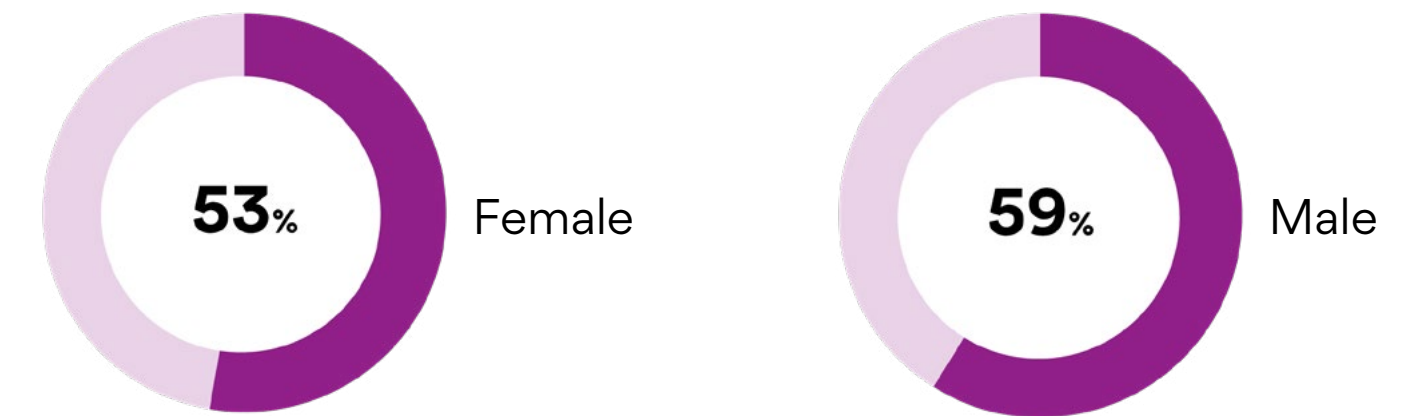
- Step 1** Get to know the women you want to reach
- Step 2** Learn from your peers
- Step 3** Plan your activity
- Step 4** Spread the word
- Step 5** Listen to feedback and be flexible
- Step 6** Build a network
- Step 7** Celebrate success stories



Why we need to focus on Black and Asian Muslim women when making activities more inclusive

Sport England's research shows that women of all cultural backgrounds are less likely than men to take part in outdoor activities. However, Black women and Asian Muslim women are the least likely to be taking part. They face a range of cultural barriers, so it's vital that we address these barriers specifically, in order to truly tackle and reduce the inequalities that currently exist in sport and physical activity.

The proportion of men and women who are active in outdoor settings



The proportion of each group who are active in outdoor settings 150 mins per week outdoors



The term 'Asian Muslim women' includes a diverse group, but in England, it mainly refers to women of South Asian origin (Indian, Pakistani, and Bangladeshi). Consequently, when discussing Asian Muslim women within this toolkit, the emphasis is on South Asian women.

STEP 1:

Get to know the women you want to reach

This first step is crucial. After all, it's only by taking the time to do this that you can confidently go about creating new and appropriate activities.

- We all have unique different identities, and women from multicultural communities may follow cultural and faith-based practices to differing degrees. However, our Cultural Guidance and Understanding toolkit aims to give you a short introduction to these elements.
- It's also important to understand the barriers that Black and Asian Muslim women face when it comes to using outdoor spaces to get active. You can find this information in section 2.0.
- Finally, we would encourage you to connect with local community and women's groups to hear directly from the people that Black and Asian Muslim women interact with every day. You can find tips on how to do this in section 2.1.





STEP 2:

Learn from your peers

Before you start developing or adapting your own activities, why not take a look at what other organisations are doing? We've pulled together examples of exciting projects up and down the country, which could give you some great ideas for developing your own activities. You can find these throughout this toolkit document.

These include:

- [Sāhēlī Hub](#), which is engaging more South Asian women in sport and physical activity in Birmingham
- [Cycle Sisters](#), a supportive and welcoming space for Muslim women to develop cycling skills, explore the local area and make new friends
- [Black Girls Hike](#), which provides a safe space for Black women to explore the outdoors
- [Swim Sista Swim programme](#) from the Canal & River Trust, which gives Black women in Nottingham the opportunity to learn how to swim
- A collaborative programme for Muslim women run by [Muslimah Sports Association](#) and [Forestry England](#) as part of [Feel Good in the Forest](#).

There are also some excellent resources for those who want to connect with others, network or trouble-shoot. These include [YHA Outdoor Citizens](#), a free membership community hosted by YHA, not-for-profit groups and organisations that are working to make the outdoors more accessible to everyone.

STEP 3: Plan your activity

Once you have a better understanding of Black and Asian Muslim women in your community and have taken a look at how others are providing tailored activities, the next step is to plan your own.

It's key that your activity addresses the barriers that women may face, so if possible, plan and build your activity hand-in-hand with the women it's intended for.

From facilitating a women-only class, or recruiting coaches from Black and Asian Muslim communities, to partnering with local community and women's groups, there are so many ways you can help make women from culturally diverse backgrounds feel welcome.

Visit section 3 for some ideas to help get your activity off the ground and section 2.1 for more information on working with community and women's groups.



STEP 4: Spread the word

You've done the hard work of planning your activity, now it's time to shout about it. There are some important things to consider. Do you need translated materials, and if so, what's the process to do this? Will you communicate via community or women's groups, via social media, or through more traditional media like local radio? All this information can be found in section 3 of this toolkit.



STEP 5: Listen to feedback and be flexible

Once your activity is up and running, it's important to be flexible in your approach. Ask for feedback and be prepared to act swiftly on any trends that are coming through. Remember, a point which may seem insignificant to you could be the difference between someone feeling comfortable enough to carry on attending sessions or dropping out altogether. Don't forget to communicate changes to build motivation and confidence amongst women.

STEP 6: Build a network

Your activity is up and running, and women love it. Are you ready to grow? Think about offering low- or no-cost training to women from culturally diverse backgrounds so they themselves have more opportunities to become coaches or activity leaders. This is all about building capacity and a community network.

STEP 7: Celebrate success stories

Finally, don't forget to celebrate the success stories of women from culturally diverse backgrounds. Document their journeys, how they've overcome barriers and what the activity means to them. Use these stories on your website, in media opportunities and at relevant community events to motivate and inspire other women from similar communities to also take part.



“In our experience it often works best to develop riders from within the group to train as Ride Leaders. They often bring a sense of commitment to the group and desire to give back.”

Sarah Javid, Cycle Sisters

Let's Get Out There Case Study

Focusing on partnerships and networks

OUTDOOR CITIZENS

Focusing on partnerships and networks

Outdoor Citizens

yha.org.uk

Who is the project run by?

Founded and hosted by YHA (England & Wales), Outdoor Citizens is a free online and face-to-face community committed to making access to the outdoors more inclusive and accessible. The community is made up of grassroots community groups providing outdoor activities; community suppliers offering inclusive approaches to training and resources; resource partners with system-wide influence, e.g. land managers, national governing bodies, brands and retailers; funders including Sport England and Natural England; and development and delivery partner All the Elements.

What's the core mission of the project?

Currently, access to nature and the outdoors is not representative of the diverse society we live in, due to multiple barriers. Outdoor Citizens' vision is a society where nature and the outdoors are inclusive and accessible for everyone.

Outdoor Citizens connects partners who have the resource, voice, capacity and power to influence at a system-wide level, with grassroots community groups who are diversifying the outdoors from the ground up. All have an essential role to play in achieving the vision.

What are the main activities?

Activities include networking training, and collaboration; distribution of funding to support community activity delivery and sustainability, and to support partnership work that will influence change; funded YHA hostel stays and free meeting rooms; support and guidance for community groups; and sharing learnings to positively inform other big system partners.

All project activity is based on need, and always fairly and equitably designed and delivered – that is a core value of the work. That means grassroots community members play a role in running the project – either through the work they are doing in the local community or by bringing their expertise and insights to others through consultation, or as specialist trainers and facilitators.



“There is no space for outdoor leaders like The Outdoor Connection. It's so needed to come together as organisations trying to support more people getting outdoors. We can learn so much from one another, and foster long-term connections, to further benefit our communities and wider society. Thanks so much for creating this space.”

Attendee at The Outdoor Connection, Outdoor Citizens annual gathering

Let's Get Out There Case Study

Focusing on Muslim women

CYCLE SISTERS

Focusing on Muslim women

Cycle Sisters

cyclesisters.org.uk

Who is the project run by?

Based in London and set up by Sarah Javaid in 2016, Cycle Sisters is a supportive and welcoming space for Muslim women and girls to develop cycling skills, explore the local area and make new friends.

What's the core mission of the project?

Cycle Sisters firmly believes that all Muslim women and girls should have the opportunity to cycle without having to compromise lifestyle or beliefs.

What do they deliver?

The group offers lessons and runs regular women-only rides which are organised by female volunteer Ride Leaders, helping to make it a safe and enjoyable experience. Rides aim to meet the specific needs of Muslim women with aspects such as halal café stops, timings around prayers, provision of advice and support on how to cycle while wearing modest clothing, all built into the model. Crucially, the organisation also offers free bikes to riders to borrow for activities and offers regular tips and advice such as 'tips for cycling in winter' and 'tips for biking during Ramadan'.

Cycle Sisters currently runs 10 groups in London, including in Tower Hamlets, Haringey, Redbridge and Hounslow and is on the lookout for volunteers to help run groups in other areas. Partners include Sustrans, British Cycling, local councils, mosques and brands such as Brompton and Rapha.

In addition to teaching cycling and taking women on regular rides, Cycle Sisters also offers free training to Muslim women from the community to become Ride Leaders and gain a British Cycling qualification, empowering local women to take on leadership roles. So far, the organisation has upskilled more than 100 women.

Cycle Sisters' annual impact survey revealed that 92% of members have improved physical and mental health, 85% feel less lonely and isolated and 90% feel more confident since joining. An independent review published in 2023, supported by the London Marathon Foundation and undertaken by Esther Anaya-Boig, an independent researcher, found that attending rides led to increases in bike ownership, confidence and cycling amongst friends and family of Cycle Sisters riders.





“I am now a much happier, healthier, and more positive person. The added bonus is I have made some fantastic new friends. Somehow Cycle Sisters gave me the boost I needed to regain the confidence I had lost. I’m me again.”

Syeda, a Cycle Sisters Ride Leader

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Focusing on Muslim women Cycle Sisters

In addition to offering rides, Cycle Sisters has developed a range of free guides targeted at different audiences – individuals looking to set up a cycle group, existing groups and clubs, and local authorities.

With case studies, stories and step-by-step tips, the guides aim to help others who have an interest in supporting more people from diverse communities to cycle. The following guides are available:

- [Cycle Sisters guide for setting up a cycling group for diverse communities](#), covering topics such as building a team, planning rides, securing funding and looking after your volunteers.
- [Cycle Sisters guide for groups and clubs to run inclusive cycle rides](#). The guide is aimed at existing groups and clubs and covers topics such as diverse imagery, inclusive communication and ride logistics.
- [Cycle Sisters guide for local authorities to increase the take up of cycling among under-represented groups](#) including women and people from culturally diverse backgrounds. The guide covers topics such as Bikeability lessons, bike access, and supporting community groups.

A photograph of two women in an outdoor setting. The woman on the left is wearing a patterned headscarf and a checkered shawl, smiling broadly. The woman on the right is seen from the back, wearing a dark blue hoodie and a hoop earring. The background consists of green trees and a grassy area.

PLANNING YOUR ACTIVITIES

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2.0

Common barriers and advice

As we've touched upon, multiple barriers can prevent England's South Asian Muslim and Black women from using outdoor spaces to get physically active. But there are also lots of positive factors which can help to overcome these, and therefore, excitingly, become ways of driving change. Derived from Multicultural Marketing Consultancy's extensive work with women from multicultural communities, qualitative research interviews with relevant individuals and desk research, in this section, we explore these factors and look at the practical steps which might be useful when developing outdoor activities for our multicultural women.

“The lack of representation in hiking is clear for all to see. It's never something I associated with Black people – it's not even marketed at Black people. Historically dominated by white middle-class males, I wasn't keen on the prospect of venturing out alone or joining a typical hikers' group where there'd be nobody I could identify with.”

Rhiane Fatinikun, Founder, Black Girls Hike



Barriers that affect women from culturally diverse backgrounds

A LACK OF REPRESENTATION

BARRIERS

FEELING UNCOMFORTABLE DUE TO THE LACK OF 'WOMEN LIKE ME' TAKING PART IN THE ACTIVITY.

Many women from culturally diverse backgrounds feel that the outdoors does not feel representative of other women like them, and therefore feel more comfortable in environments where there are more people like them who they can identify with.

SOLUTIONS

Practical steps

- Offer opportunities exclusively for a particular community.
- Recruit activity leaders who are representative of the people from the community, and where relevant, who speak mother-tongue languages.
- With kit or equipment, offer a range of sizes to make the sessions more inclusive and enable our women with different needs to participate. For example, larger helmets for women who wear a hijab or whose hairstyles are not accommodated by mainstream helmets.
- Increase knowledge and confidence amongst delivery teams about the importance of representation. You could point them to this toolkit.

What to tell people

- Be clear – e.g. if the activity is for a particular community, say so – and make it clear whether it's for both men and women or women only.
- Showcase inspirational and relatable case studies from the community to reflect this really is an activity for them.

Barriers that affect women from culturally diverse backgrounds

A LACK OF WOMEN-ONLY CLASSES

BARRIERS

FEELING UNCOMFORTABLE IN A MIXED-GENDER ENVIRONMENT.

For South Asian Muslim women, this is often due to religious and cultural reasons and a desire to maintain modesty.

However, the desire for women-only offerings extends to women from all ethnicities.

SOLUTIONS

Practical steps

- Offer opportunities exclusively for women.
- Recruit female activity leaders representative of the women this activity is for, and where relevant, who speak mother-tongue languages.
- Provide a women-only changing facility with an adequate number of private changing rooms/ cabins.
- Consider offering low- or no-cost training courses for women from culturally diverse backgrounds so they can become coaches/activity leaders. This will be an excellent way to build capacity, grow your offering and increase representation.

Key consideration: Is your activity for **all women, or women from a particular community** – e.g. South Asian women or Black women?

What to tell people

- Be clear – e.g. if the activity is for women only, say this. If it's predominantly for Asian Muslim women or Black women, say this.
- Showcase inspirational and relatable case studies from the community to reflect this really is an activity for them.

Barriers that affect women from culturally diverse backgrounds

A LACK OF SKILLS/CONFIDENCE

BARRIERS

LACK OF SKILLS.

NOT FEELING FIT ENOUGH.

LACK OF CONFIDENCE.

SOLUTIONS

Practical steps

- Offer coaching sessions for all levels, including complete beginner/novice.
- Offer an activity unrelated to physical activity in addition to the outdoor pursuit – this could help to motivate our women who may not yet feel comfortable or confident in partaking – e.g. a ‘chai and chat’ morning or arts and crafts.
- Offer a buddy system so our women can either bring a friend or be paired with someone, so they can go on the journey together.

What to tell people

- Offer reassurance that coaching/ upskilling is part of the activity offer.
- Offer reassurance that women of all levels are welcome, including complete beginners, and demonstrate this through case study stories.
- Extend the activity invitation to friends and family to help women feel familiar and more confident in unfamiliar environments.
- Frame the activity as a positive way to spend time with friends and family and meet new people.
- Offer information about your buddy system, if available.

Barriers that affect women from culturally diverse backgrounds

TIMING AND OTHER COMMITMENTS

BARRIERS

A LACK OF TIME.

ACTIVITIES OFFERED AT TIMES THAT DON'T SUIT THEIR SCHEDULES.

A LACK OF CHILDCARE.

SOLUTIONS

Practical steps

- Offer activities at different times to suit different women – e.g. during the school day for stay-at-home mums or those who work reduced or flexible hours. Weekends or evenings during the summer months, when it is lighter until later, may suit women who have a 9–5 job.
- Offer activities for mums and daughters or mums and babies.
- Consider whether you can offer childcare provision.

What to tell people

- Communicate the length of time the activity will take.
- Communicate the range of times that are available for the specific activity.
- Communicate that the offering is family friendly/baby friendly.

Barriers that affect women from culturally diverse backgrounds

THE COST

BARRIERS

THE COST OF ACTIVITIES.

THE COST OF EQUIPMENT OR KIT.

“I always used to borrow one of the council bikes for the rides, which was a great way to get started without having to commit to buying a bike.”

Maryam, Cycle Sisters Community Member

SOLUTIONS

Practical steps

- Offer free or low-cost sessions.
- Offer kit to borrow at low or no cost.

What to tell people

- Make the cost of the activity clear in all communications
- If offering free or low-cost kit, ensure this is communicated at every juncture.

Barriers that affect women from culturally diverse backgrounds

LACK OF TRANSPORT

BARRIERS

A LACK OF TRANSPORT

Many people from multicultural backgrounds live in urban areas and many are a distance from green spaces.

Many women may not own a car or be able to pay for transport costs to get to a particular place for an outdoor activity.

SOLUTIONS

Practical steps

- Offer opportunities to get into the outdoors via local urban settings like parks and canals, which are more accessible by public transport or on foot.
- Offer free or low-cost transportation – e.g. a minibus or car-share.
- Consider the meeting place/location carefully – e.g. a central location with good transport links.

Additional consideration for our South Asian Muslim women:

- Consider religious and cultural factors when deciding the meeting place, for example, don't meet outside a pub.

What to tell people

- Communicate the opportunity to enjoy local urban outdoors settings.
- If offering free or low-cost transport to access further locations, ensure this is communicated at every juncture.
- Communicate the virtues of the meeting place – e.g. the buses or trains that run to that place, or how far it is on foot from the town centre.



BARRIERS AFFECTING MUSLIM WOMEN

“The Lycra-wearing, typical cyclist was so far removed from what I’d even try. I’ve gone from reluctant, to giving it a go, to cycling enthusiast and now owning my own bike and cycling with my family too. All without having to compromise what I’m wearing. Cycle Sisters has shown me how cycling can accommodate anyone.”

Aysha, Cycle Sisters community member

A PERCEIVED COMPROMISE ON CULTURE AND FAITH

BARRIERS

MANY OF OUR SOUTH ASIAN MUSLIM WOMEN MAY NOT TAKE PART IN OUTDOORS PURSUITS BECAUSE OF CONCERNS THAT THEY MAY HAVE TO COMPROMISE RELIGIOUS OR CULTURAL BELIEFS – E.G. BY WEARING CLOTHING WHICH IS INAPPROPRIATE, OR MISSING PRAYERS.

SOLUTIONS

Practical steps

- Provide female coaches/activity leads from a South Asian Muslim background.
- Consider the timing of activities so they are sympathetic to prayer timings. Should it not be possible to shift the timing of the class week to week, consider other elements such as the provision of a prayer room on-site, or incorporating prayer stops within the activity schedule.
- Provide a women-only changing facility with an adequate number of private changing rooms/cabins so that women can maintain modesty, even with just other women around.
- With kit or equipment, offer a range of sizes to enable women with different needs to participate – e.g. larger helmets for our Asian Muslim women who wear a hijab.
- Ensure that the activity is private and away from the male gaze. NOTE, this is more than a female-only offering: it's about ensuring privacy from onlookers.
- Ensure any refreshment stops provide options that meet any religious dietary requirements.
- Offer training to delivery teams around cultural awareness to help them develop initiatives and ways of working which are sensitive and tailored to our women. A good start would be sharing this toolkit and some of the resources highlighted within it.

What to tell people

- Demonstrate that advice and programmes are culturally inclusive and appropriate – e.g:
 - Provide reassurance that women can wear anything that they feel comfortable in, including modest, loose-fitting attire and a hijab.
 - Provide advice and support on how to conduct the activity – e.g. cycling – while wearing modest clothing and a helmet.
 - Provide advice at key calendar moments – e.g. tips on incorporating the activity into Ramadan.
- Showcase inspirational and relatable case studies from the community to drive the message that 'people like me' are doing this.
- If you're engaging with faith leaders, you might ask them to address issues relating to religious beliefs that may be preventing women from getting involved.

Barriers affecting Muslim women

**LACK OF PROFICIENCY
IN ENGLISH**

BARRIERS

**BE MINDFUL THAT
SOME WOMEN IN
OUR AUDIENCE
MAY NOT BE AS
PROFICIENT IN ENGLISH.**

SOLUTIONS

Practical steps

- Translate messages when appropriate.
- Recruit activity leaders and volunteers who speak mother-tongue languages.
- Simplify language used.
- Limit the use of acronyms or technical jargon and explain terms if it's necessary to use them.

What to tell people

- Let women know that there will be someone present who speaks a mother-tongue language, if appropriate.



BARRIERS AFFECTING DISABLED WOMEN

This guide focuses on the needs of women from culturally diverse backgrounds and what can be done to make outdoor activities more accessible and welcoming. Within this it is important to remember that some of the women you will be looking to engage will also be disabled or have long-term health conditions.

Disabled people from culturally diverse communities experience a range of health and socio-economic disparities when compared to their White British and non-disabled peers. These include lower levels of access, uptake and enjoyment of sport and physical activity.

So when you're considering how to ensure that the appeal and uptake of your activities is as wide and inclusive as possible, it's important to engage with and consider the needs of disabled women and those with long-term health conditions.

The benefits of getting active in nature are universal – we need to ensure that these opportunities are inclusive and accessible to everyone.

BARRIERS

PHYSICAL BARRIERS TO PARTICIPATION (E.G. UNEVEN TERRAIN OR LACK OF HANDRAILS).

LACK OF INFORMATION ABOUT FACILITIES AND THE ACTIVITY AVAILABLE BEFOREHAND.

ACTIVITIES ARE NOT DESIGNED, ADVERTISED OR RUN IN AN APPROPRIATE AND ACCESSIBLE WAY.

SOLUTIONS

Practical steps

- Prioritise universal design and engage with experts when constructing facilities.
- Make sure your website is accessible to all people and provide a means for someone to contact the venue/provider to ask more specific questions.
- Upskill your staff and providers to equip them with the skills to engage disabled people and people with long-term health conditions more effectively in physical activity. The CIMPSA Accredited Inclusivity Activity Programme is a good starting point.
- Engage with disabled people and relevant organisations when you are designing and planning activities. Be open to ideas and feedback.

What to tell people

- Be specific about the facilities offered – go beyond labelling spaces as ‘accessible’ and spell out what people will find, e.g. the width of accessible surfaces.
- Make it clear to people that these facilities are available so they can plan their trips in advance.
- Let your audience know that your staff have taken part and communicate the changes you have made to your provision.
- Case studies of those that have taken part can help to showcase inclusion.

You may find the following resources useful:

- [Guidance on engaging Disabled People on the Sport England website](#)
- [Activity Alliance Ten Principles](#)
- [Activity Alliance Engaging All Women in Physical Activity](#)
- [We Are Undefeatable](#)
- [Get Out, Get Active \(GOGA\)](#) – a nationwide programme supporting disabled people and non-disabled people to be active together

Let's Get Out There Case Study

People with disabilities

SENSORY WALKS

People with disabilities

Sensory walks

sense.org.uk

Who is the project run by?

The sensory walks programme is the result of a partnership between Sense, the charity supporting people who are deafblind or have complex disabilities, and Ordnance Survey. It won an award for diversity and inclusion at the Outdoor Industry Awards 2022.

What's the core mission of the project?

The project has been created to help people with complex disabilities enjoy the benefits of going for a walk outside. These benefits include being active; connecting with nature; improved social connections, self-esteem, mood and sleep quality; and reduced anxiety and stress.

What do they deliver?

Sensory walks are tried and tested walking routes across England and Wales that allow people to use their senses to connect with their surroundings whilst staying active, delivered via the free [OS Maps app](#). The walks can be any length and each route includes milestones and sensory highlights. Participants can enjoy them on foot, or by using a wheelchair or walker.

There's also a Making Walks Sensory toolkit, which includes advice on planning walks and suggested sensory activities. This has been designed for anyone who supports disabled people, including volunteers or walk leaders. All activities have been created with people with complex disabilities in mind and are applicable for all ages.



“Sensory walks are a great way to enjoy your environment. They help you explore and discover new sights and sounds. They’ve made our walks so much more engaging for the people we support with higher, more complex needs.”

Support worker, Sense

2.1 Engaging community groups

In this section, we look at the importance of engaging community and faith groups and why this is key when working to reach women from culturally diverse communities.

The terms ‘community groups’ and ‘faith groups’ are broad, comprising a range of types of groups including general community groups, women’s groups, churches or church groups, Mosques, parenting groups or even physical activity groups. Note that Mosques are usually frequented by men, although some have networks and groups for women.

Engagement with community groups provides scope to build a network of advocates in the community through investment in strong relationships. Furthermore, approaches developed and delivered in collaboration with community and faith organisations are likely to have greater success in engaging your audiences. However, it is important that you engage these groups with care.

Here, we will explore how you can identify potential community partners, key principles for engagement and some examples of how you might choose to work with these groups.



IDENTIFYING AND APPROACHING THE RIGHT PARTNERS

Identifying partners will require time for research to understand the types of groups available in your local area, what their aims and objectives are and how they engage and work with women in the community.

TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL ENGAGEMENT:

- 01 If there is a member of your team who is from the same community as that which the groups serve, and who can speak mother-tongue languages, involve them, and if possible, have them lead the communications approach.
- 02 Be mindful that trusting relationships take time and commitment to forge.
- 03 Be prepared to have conversations out of hours to fit into the schedules of volunteers or group leaders.
- 04 Don't expect pro bono support. The work that organisations do in the community is valuable and important. The running of groups may be reliant on grants, donations and the time and commitment of volunteers. Consider whether you can offer payment of expenses, payment for time or a project fee based on the level of support. You may also want to consider a value exchange.
- 05 Take the time to meet members of the organisation in person to outline in more detail your goals and how you might be able to forge a working relationship. Don't forget to take time to understand the goals of the organisation too, so you can find synergies.
- 06 When you've established contact, check if they prefer contact by email, telephone, WhatsApp or text message and use this as a primary means of contact moving forwards.
- 07 Follow up by telephone if you don't hear back.
- 08 Keep emails short and to the point.
- 09 Be mindful that community groups are often contacted by commercial, governmental, local authority and other groups.

There can therefore be a level of scepticism around the longevity of projects. It is important to make realistic and meaningful commitments which you can honour.

EXAMPLES OF HOW YOU CAN WORK WITH GROUPS

Co-creation

If objectives align, there may be an opportunity to co-create an activity. For those who may be less familiar, co-creation involves the practice of collaborating with other stakeholders to seek input, develop ideas and guide the design process.

CO-CREATION COULD INCLUDE:

- 01 Asking for their advice and guidance at every juncture.
- 02 Asking a trusted partner to build a tailored offering which will suit the needs of women in the community.
- 03 Co-badging (including both organisations' logos/details) on promotional materials.

SUPPORTIVE TRUSTED VOICE

There could be scope to recruit a member of the organisation to act as a supportive voice for the launch of the activity, by lending a quote to media materials, acting as a spokesperson for interviews or to offer their logo for promotional materials.

BENEFITS INCLUDE:

- 01 Support from a trusted organisation and voice in the community will help to build trust and potentially motivate action.
- 02 The use of the group's logo, or multiple logos, will help women to quickly identify that the offering is being supported by groups they know and trust, again acting as a lever to encourage action.

Things to consider:

As a co-created effort, allow enough time for approvals from all parties and be prepared to compromise on some elements.

If you include a group's logo on your promotional materials, these materials will require approval from the group in question. While feedback should help to ensure that items are fit for purpose for the target community, it's important to build ample time for the process and to be prepared for some level of compromise.

SUPPORT TO SPREAD THE WORD AND GAIN COMMUNITY BUY-IN

There could be scope to work with the group to spread the word and encourage participation through their own channels – e.g. WhatsApp groups, email newsletters or social media posts. If you choose to work with a group in this way, provide materials in a readily available and easily accessible format so that it is easy for the organisation to support.

BENEFITS INCLUDE:

- 01 Support from a trusted organisation will help to build trust and potentially motivate action.



SUPPORT TO ENGAGE AND RECRUIT ACTIVITY LEADERS

You could work with groups to recruit paid or voluntary activity leaders to give ownership and build capacity.

- 01 A means of in-kind payment to the group (if training to upskill is offered at no cost).
- 02 An efficient method to recruit like-minded activity leaders that will resonate with women from the community.
- 03 A means of building capacity and expanding your offering.

LET'S GET OUT THERE CASE STUDY

FOCUSING ON BLACK WOMEN

SWIM SISTA SWIM PROGRAMME

Focusing on Black women

Swim Sista Swim Programme

canalrivertrust.org.uk

Who is the project run by?

The Swim Sista Swim programme is run by the Canal & River Trust in Nottingham and supported by funding from Sport England.

What's the core mission of the project?

The project was launched because data shows that Black women are underrepresented in water-based wellbeing activities, and according to the World Health Organisation, statistically the Black community is at greater risk of drowning. Since research also shows that spending time by water can help people feel happier and healthier, it's hoped that the project will deliver long-term health benefits to those taking part.

What do they deliver?

Swim Sista Swim is a 12-month programme that aims to give Black women in the city the confidence to spend more time by Nottingham's waterways and take part in water-based activities. It also encourages Black women to become advocates for water safety and the health and wellbeing benefits of water-based activities across their wider communities.

As part of the project, women take part in 10 weeks of swim sessions, followed by a 6-week introduction to paddle sports. There are also workshops to better understand the barriers Black women face around swimming. One known barrier is around haircare, and so, as part of the programme, the Canal & River Trust have also teamed up with Soul Cap, a company that offers a larger than average swimming cap to accommodate thicker, curlier hair, to offer free swimming caps to those taking part.

“Research shows that spending time by Nottinghamshire’s waterways is good for our physical and mental health, but how do people feel those benefits if they don’t feel comfortable by the water?”

“The aim of this project is to act as a stepping stone and help women from Nottingham’s Black community to feel safer and more confident around water so that they can really enjoy their local waterways and the benefits that being by water brings.”

Carol Burrell, community wellbeing coordinator at the Canal & River Trust

Let's Get Out There Case Study

Focusing on Muslim women

NORDIC WALKS, MUSLIMAH SPORTS ASSOCIATION & FORESTRY ENGLAND

Focusing on Muslim women

Nordic walks, Muslimah Sports Association and Forestry England

muslimahsports.org.uk

Who is the project run by?

The Nordic walking sessions are a collaboration between Muslimah Sports Association (MSA), which encourages Muslim women to participate in sports to address mental health challenges, get more exercise and combat loneliness, and Forestry England as part of their Feel Good in the Forest Programme, funded by Sport England.

What's the core mission of the project?

South Asian people suffer disproportionately with heart problems and diabetes, and studies have shown levels of activity in South Asian women in particular are low.

But Muslimah Sports Association was aware that many Muslim women in the UK face barriers to accessing nature, and perceive rural environments to be somewhere they are not welcome.

The Feel Good in the Forest Programme aims to tackle these barriers and enable Muslim women to access the benefits of walking in nature, in ways that meet their cultural needs and help them feel comfortable.

What do they deliver?

Weekly Nordic walks in Thames Chase Forest Centre are led by Anne Mills for Forestry England and attended by women from Ilford, Romford, Forest Gate and Stratford in east London. Other walks take place at Pages Wood in the borough of Havering.

Nordic walking is a form of exercise with Finnish roots that uses poles to open up the chest and engage muscles in the upper body as well as in the legs. It is extremely helpful for those with lung conditions like asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, or simply for people who have been sitting at desks all day.

MSA's first Nordic walking sessions took place in winter, when Muslim prayer times are close together. This could have made it difficult or impossible for people to attend, so when the walks were scheduled near prayer times, Forestry England onsite partner the Thames Chase Trust provided the group with a quiet, private prayer space. This allowed the MSA women to take their time and enjoy the sessions fully.

Knowing that there is a ready-made MSA community waiting for them in the forest is an instant confidence booster for participants, who drink tea together at the end of the walk, helping to foster friendships.

“A lot of people, especially in our community, are experiencing mental and physical health issues. They come out for reasons like: ‘I need to escape’, ‘I need a little bit of clarity’. They’ve made friends and they’ve bonded.

“Muslim women [sometimes] stay within the community, and so they don’t often talk to people from different ethnicities. Those little conversations made [the women] think: ‘We’re not odd. We’re not different. We’re all here for the same reason’.”

Salma Quaium, MSA's group manager in East London

COMMUNICATIONS

THIS
GIRL
CAN

3.0

Creating culturally sensitive communications

Once you've developed your activity, it's time to get the word out and welcome participants.

The way you promote your activities can play a crucial part in attracting the attention of more diverse audiences, some of whom may not have taken part in outdoor activities before.

It can be tempting to rely on promoting activities in your usual places, such as putting up posters in your sites or sharing information through your social media pages. While this can be a good way to talk to people who already know of you, it won't necessarily help you reach people who don't.

This section aims to provide you with some tips and pointers to help you plan your communications approach to reach a more diverse audience, including:

- Key strategic recommendations
- Advice on translations
- Information and guidance on communication routes
- Providing reassurance





3.1 Planning your communications approach – some strategic considerations

Consider your timing

- Be aware of key cultural and religious festival dates and plan your approach accordingly. Understanding the role and meaning of these festivals and dates will help assess whether they are appropriate times for messaging, and what types of messaging would be suitable and welcomed.
- Women from culturally diverse backgrounds need to be in the right mindset to engage. For example, Ramadan is a month about reflection and penance when many Muslims abstain from activities, so this may not be the most effective time to engage. However, the period after Eid-Al-Fitr, which marks the end of the fasting period, is likely to be more fruitful. Likewise, the Christmas holiday is a time for celebration and often a time for over-indulgence, so whilst this may not be the best time to speak with women about getting active outdoors, January – traditionally a time for change and resolutions – could be a much better time.

Find the best messenger

- Think about enlisting the expertise of the right people to deliver the message. It's important to know who the audience is more likely to listen to, trust and identify with. Trusted female voices from local community groups, coaches/volunteers and activity leaders from the community who support your initiative are all examples of individuals who could help to effectively engage.

Use stories of 'people like me'

- Showcasing the stories of 'women like me' is a crucial element to help break down the barriers to engagement.
- Women from Black and South Asian Muslim communities need to see and hear the stories of people from similar walks of life who hike, cycle, trail walk, bell-boat, kayak etc, hear about how they've overcome the barriers, and the difference that the activity has made to their lives.

Use images of ‘women like me’ in promotional materials

- Activity materials – should be relatable.
- In your posters, leaflets, details on a website, etc, include images of culturally diverse women, ideally taking part in the activity.
- Women from Asian and Black communities have distinctive features which are easily identifiable within communities. So, if you are trying to reach people from a particular community – e.g. Black African women – it is recommended that you feature real women from this community in your communications, for example, a coach or women already taking part.
- Consider the use of relevant clothing when creating visual content. For example, if you are targeting women from Muslim communities, it is advisable to have the woman in your photo wearing a hijab, but if you are targeting Black African or Caribbean women, your female model may be wearing a head tie with appropriate patterns.
- Consider co-creation of assets with community groups (see section 2.1 for information on engaging with community and faith groups).

Decorum and etiquette

- When targeting women from Asian Muslim communities, public displays of affection, or physical contact between people (such as hugging or holding hands) should be treated with care, as this may be seen as culturally inappropriate.
- Publicity materials aimed at our Asian Muslim women should consider that many Muslim women choose to dress modestly in all contexts, including when exercising, as highlighted in the culturally intelligent guidance section of this toolkit.



Testing

- Test materials with the target communities to ensure that you are getting this right. Whilst this can be achieved via formal creative testing research or cultural advisers, you could also consider getting feedback from friends within or outside of your organisation – e.g. relevant community organisations that represent our women – which could be a lower-budget option. There is further guidance regarding working with community groups in section 2.1.
- Capture people's experience in their own voice. Ask people who have taken part to give you quotes. Make sure you have written consent from them to use these in any marketing.

Accessibility

- It's important to ensure your communications are as accessible as possible. The charity Activity Alliance has written a series of [factsheets](#) that you may find useful, covering a range of communication topics, channels, tools and platforms.



3.2 Top tips on using translations

It can be tempting to think translating communications materials will increase their reach.

However, any successful communications approach will need to take account of the multilingual nature of Black and Asian Muslim communities and the need for materials in formats other than written translations. Strategies that assume people speak and read a single language are likely to have limited success.

- 01 Produce the original text in plain and simple English. Complex text is harder to translate, making it more difficult to understand.
- 02 Avoid jargon and technical terms.
- 03 Leave the names of the service (e.g. This Girl Can, Active Partnerships) in English – don't attempt to translate them. Leave any contact information (telephone number and address) in English.
- 04 Bilingual information (English and mother tongue) is far more effective, as different generations within a family can access the information.
- 05 Keep the format short (for example, fact sheets) and use bullet points and checklists. Also use clear typography and large fonts.
- 06 Have all translation checked prior to production to ensure that the language is accurate, straightforward and not in an academic style.
- 07 Visuals and graphics alongside simple language can be another way to make information more accessible and work for multiple communities speaking various languages.
- 08 Consider promoting the availability of translated material and distribution. Publicity materials should highlight that information is available in alternative languages, signposting readers to where it can be accessed.
- 09 Some non-English speakers are not literate in their mother tongue language; therefore, visually led materials or oral advice (possibly via an intermediary) may be more effective.
- 10 The sheer range of languages spoken and read in many areas can make translation expensive and impractical. Oral advice (via a third party) is often preferred and can be more effective than written information.



3.3 Media guidance

Black and South Asian women in our communities consume both mainstream and specialist media, so it is important to consider both as part of your communications mix.

Based on the information you are promoting and your target audience, the most appropriate channel, e.g. social media or print media, will differ.

Since many of the initiatives that you will be promoting will be local, where possible, this toolkit explores each channel at a hyper-local or community level first and then expands into the national offering.

A number of media outlets are mentioned on the following pages which are example outlets and therefore not an exhaustive list. The outlets were active at the time of publication of this toolkit, though this is subject to change.

Channels include:

- Radio
- Print/online
- Social media
- Podcasts
- TV
- Hyper-local advertising



RADIO

Radio

- Community-led radio stations typically cover a small geographical area with a coverage radius of up to 5km and are run on a not-for-profit basis. Although they have a low reach, many are popular in their specific areas. There are many hyper-local community radio stations which cater to Black and South Asian audiences up and down the country, so this can be an effective way of reaching the local community. The full list of community-led radio stations can be found via [Ofcom](#).
- At a broader level, there are several specialist commercial regional stations. Most will have opportunities for issue-based content, although these may have to be paid for. Additionally, there is multicultural programming within some BBC regional stations in areas where there are high proportions of Black and South Asian people.
- At a national level, there is one national BBC radio station, [BBC Asian Network](#), and a national commercial station, [Sunrise Radio](#), both targeted at South Asian audiences. There are other stations that cater to both communities such as [Sabras Radio](#) or [Radio XL](#) for the South Asian community or [The Beat](#) and [Kemet FM](#) for the Black community.



PRINT/ONLINE

Print/online

- Like mainstream print, many ethnic print outlets have transferred to digital formats, due to diminishing reader numbers.
- However, there are several regional titles that are a key part of South Asian communities' heritage in the UK. These titles could prove useful in conveying information about the launch of specialist groups or initiatives if communication and the offering is genuinely tailored. Examples of these publications include [Asian Express](#) (covers Yorkshire, East of England and the West Midlands) and [Asian Standard](#) (covers Yorkshire and London).
- Outside of regional titles, some national outlets could work to generate coverage on bigger initiatives launching at a national level, or in several regions across the country. Example titles include [The Voice](#) (African and Caribbean community), [African Voice](#) (mainly for the African community), [The Gleaner](#) (mainly Caribbean community), [Eastern Eye](#) (South Asian audience) and [Asian Voice](#) (South Asian audience).



SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media

- Whilst your organisation may not have the reach or the following to reach our multicultural women via your own social media channels, an effective means of communication is via the social channels of messengers, case studies or coaches from the communities that you are working with.
- You may consider the development of mini targeted and geo-located paid social campaigns using relevant, tailored assets that will appeal to the target communities.
- Another effective way of reaching the audience is by posting information on relevant, sometimes local, social media groups frequented by your target audience. In some instances, these groups are closed or have an editorial identity accompanied by a website and bolstered by online or in-person events, so you would need to discuss the idea with the administrator/group owner/founder who may be keen to develop the idea in a creative fashion.
- In general, Facebook is favoured by mid-to-older audiences, Instagram is the channel of choice for young-to-mid-age audiences, and TikTok is favoured by younger audiences. However, best practice is to research where your particular audience tends to be. It's not usually necessary to be on every platform.
- Alongside more formal social media channels like Facebook and Instagram, consider whether it would be appropriate to use WhatsApp groups to communicate with your audience. Ask for help from those that have engaged to spread the word by inviting to join the groups or communities you've set up.
- Within the social media mix, consider all avenues such as Facebook Live, Instalive, Instagram stories, video posts and static posts. You'll find more information on using social media effectively in our Social Media Skills guide on the campaign hub.

Download Activity Alliance's [factsheet](#) on this topic for more guidance.



PODCASTS

Podcasts

- As with mainstream media, there has been a growth in specialist South Asian and Black community-specific podcasts which appeal to younger and middle-aged audiences.
- While always on the hunt for the next relevant story, many podcasters develop their scheduling in advance. Podcasts are also often designed to be national or international in focus, so consider how your activity provision fits into a broader trend, or the value your spokesperson brings in an overarching context.
- For example, if you are launching a new local specialist hiking initiative, consider the other notable specialist hiking initiatives in the country and develop a pitch to the podcaster which looks at this issue as a whole.



TELEVISION

TV

- While there has been an increase in the number of TV channels available to Black and South Asian audiences, as with many of the print/online titles, these are national in reach, covering national issues. Unless there is a bigger national story to tell, they're not always appropriate for local, 'on-the-ground' activations.
- If you have a national programme that has been developed, it is worth noting that a substantial proportion of South Asian TV shows are produced in India, Pakistan and Bangladesh. The Black channels are either generic American-generated entertainment content, or feature 'Nollywood' (Nigerian) films, or African-generated content. Some of the channels across the Black and South Asian sphere do have UK-produced news and social issues/magazine format programmes, and there is a growing number of faith-based shows, so it is worth seeking these out.



HYPER-LOCAL ADVERTISING

Hyper-local advertising

- Hyper-local advertising can also be an effective means of reaching target audiences. Based on your available budget, options to consider include:
 - Advertising in GPs and pharmacies – e.g. screens, leaflets, posters.
 - Advertising in newsagents, general stores, coffee shops and local supermarkets – e.g. on notice boards which are often free to access, or in shop displays, for which there might be a small weekly or monthly fee.
 - Out-of-home advertising – e.g. billboards at bus stops, train stations and on high streets.

3.4 Help women feel prepared

It can be intimidating to try a new activity or visit a new space for the first time.

Reassure women by providing them with everything they need to know to feel prepared. This could include:

- How should they dress? Should they come expecting to get dirty or have warm clothes to protect them from the weather?
- What equipment they will need. Can this be hired/borrowed on the day? If not, where might they find it?
- Who will be leading the group? Can you share a photo of them and any information about them and their background?
- Who else will be taking part? Is the class open to anyone or aimed at a specific group (e.g. women only). If so, what steps have been made to meet the needs of this group?
- Where will it be taking place? Can you share any photos, or even better a video tour, of the space, so people know what to expect?
- How can they get there? Can you share detailed instructions on travelling there by public transport as well as by car?
- How do people know it will be safe? Can you provide any information on what makes the activity safe? For example, they will be taking part with other members of a group; the group leader is first aid trained; the site has suitable facilities if there are adverse weather conditions.
- What facilities are available? Are people able to store their belongings? Will they be able to get changed? Is there a café or anywhere to buy food and drink?





3.5 The importance of representative photography

The photography you use to promote your activities can have a significant impact on how broadly they appeal. If your images show only a narrow group of people taking part, then many people may assume that activity is not for them.

The more we showcase people from different backgrounds and with different lived experiences taking part in outdoor activities, the more we can engage all communities. And the more people engage in our content, the more inclusive we can make outdoors activity.

This Girl Can photo library

It can sometimes be challenging to find existing imagery which represents a broader audience. To help address this lack of representation, we've added some new photos to the This Girl Can photo library, showing a diverse mix of women getting active in outdoor settings. These photos include women taking part in activities such as walking, outdoor yoga and accessible cycling.

The photos can be downloaded for free from the [campaign hub](#) and used in any materials you're creating to promote your activities.

We plan to add to this library over time, to showcase different activities and settings. If there are specific activities you'd like to see represented, please contact us at thisgirlcan@sportengland.org

Creating your own photography

Having photography that showcases a specific activity and setting can really help new audiences feel confident about giving it a go. If time and budgets allow, you may wish to create your own photography or empower your teams to do so.

Here are some things to think about when you're planning to create imagery.

- 01** Authenticity is key. Genuine representations of the activities you run and the people who take part in them will help to build trust and credibility amongst your audience.
- 02** Engage with relevant community groups and invite them to take part, but when doing so be sure to refer to best practice suggestions in section 2.1.
- 03** When you're arranging a shoot, think about what you plan to show and what you want people to take away from the imagery. For example, Sport England research has shown that in order to engage with an activity, women need to know it is Safe, Social, Self-affirming and Suitable. Consider how your new photos can help reassure women that your activity will meet these needs.
- 04** Be as inclusive as possible. Showing all aspects of diversity through photography can be challenging but it's important to think beyond just race. Is there a way you can demonstrate that your activities are open to and enjoyed by people of all sexual orientations, gender identities, religions, and those with disabilities?
- 05** Showcasing the services and spaces can also help to demonstrate inclusion. Many groups who do not currently engage in outdoor activities may have worries over whether the facilities or offerings are going to meet their needs. Photography showing changing facilities, or braille on signs, for example, can all visually signify inclusion.
- 06** Think about the person behind the camera. By using diverse photographers you can bring in fresh perspectives, helping your photography reflect a range of perspectives which may resonate with a broader audience.
- 07** Ensure you have consent. Check that anyone appearing in your images or videos has signed a model release form. The Royal Photographic Society provide a free-to-use template.
- 08** Download Activity Alliance's [factsheet](#) on this topic for more guidance.



Let's Get Out There Case Study

Focusing on Black women

BLACK GIRLS HIKE

Focusing on Black women

Black Girls Hike

bghuk.com

Who is the project run by?

Black Girls Hike was founded by Rhiane Fatinikun MBE in 2019, to create a safe space for Black women to explore the outdoors and reconnect with nature. Struck by the lack of diversity in the outdoors and determined to change this, she set up a Facebook group for Black women, and those from African and Caribbean communities. This was a space to connect through nationwide group hikes, outdoor activities and training. Fast forward three years, group membership now exceeds 12,000 women from ages 18 upwards. Rhiane was made an MBE in the 2024 New Year Honours for her services to Nature and Diversity.

What's the core mission of the project?

Challenging the status quo. Black Girls Hike encourages Black women to reconnect with nature and aims to diversify the British landscape at the same time.

As a charity, many of the Black Girls Hike events are run with a suggested donation of £5.00.

What do they deliver?

Black Girls Hike hosts nationwide group hikes, activity weekends and international trips. They also have a youth programme, deliver the DofE Bronze award and are an accredited Training Provider with Mountain Training. The charity fosters a safe environment with a range of ways to get involved. Leaders are also trained in outdoor first aid, and provided with kit so they have everything they need to lead groups outdoors, and to cater to women who may not have the right kit.

Black Girls Hike have a vision to be the leading outdoor experience provider for Black women in the UK by:

1. Educating their community on the outdoors, by providing high-quality training opportunities
2. Providing outdoor experiences domestically and internationally
3. Cultivating and co-creating more community spaces in nature for Black Women across the UK.

Often, the group may have up to 15 nationwide hikes a month as well as family days and weekend and international trips. Example hikes include 'Greater Manchester – Harridge round walk' and 'London Capital Ring Section 7'.

“Groups like Black Girls Hike are so important for empowering and enabling people. We’re giving people the confidence and the skills to go into those spaces, surrounded by people that are like-minded and non-judgmental, and then they can build upon that experience until they feel confident to adventure independently. Because it’s not just about challenging stereotypes in the wider outdoor community, it’s about challenging the stereotypes within our community as well... So, the idea is also to expose people to it and show them that they can enjoy it too.”

Rhiane Fatinikun, Founder

Let's Get Out There Case Study

Focusing on South Asian women

SÄHĒLĪ HUB

Focusing on South Asian women

Säheli Hub

saheli.co.uk

Who is the project run by?

Säheli Hub is a registered charity founded in 1998 to engage more women in physical activity and sport and improve community health and wellbeing in Birmingham. Since then they have worked with over 16,000 women from ethnically diverse and disadvantaged communities, pioneering new opportunities which challenge stereotypes, break down barriers and tackle inequality.

What's the core mission of the project?

Säheli Hub was set up by and for South Asian women, who have the lowest engagement in physical activity, sport and local neighbourhood activities despite South Asian communities making up 60% of the population of the West Midlands. Now, Säheli Hub works across the local community with women and men from a wide range of ethnically diverse backgrounds.

Säheli Hub aims to empower women to participate, on their terms, using culturally sensitive, tailored approaches which enable ethnically diverse women and girls to feel comfortable and welcome being involved in sport. Core to the model is helping women to build and sustain new friendships so they feel connected to peers and their community and can go on an adventure together.

Among their successes, Säheli Hub created the first Asian girls sports club in Birmingham; originated the first social prescribing model using community-based approaches to managing long-term health conditions; led the way training local women to become sports leaders/coaches reflective of the community they serve and live in; and taught thousands of women to run and cycle. Raising aspirations and expanding horizons, Säheli Hub has shown women they can do anything they set their hearts to.

What do they deliver?

1. Free provision for South Asian women and, often, by South Asian women

Säheli Hub offers free outdoor activities include cycling, running, kayaking, tennis and bell-boating. Classes are offered for women, by women instructors and coaches, and led by women from within the communities which they serve. Activities are chosen by participants and as their confidence grows women can progress into more challenging physical activity and sport groups. Säheli Hub helps women change their lifestyles so they get active and stay active.

“I want to break down the stereotypes that ethnic-minority women and girls do not like sport. They have just not been given the opportunity or support to try it – everyone should have the chance to benefit from the amazing impact sport has.”

“If your workforce is not reflective of the community you want to reach, then you don't have any understanding of how to engage and bring people on board and deliver what they need.”

Naseem Akhtar BEM, founder of Säheli Hub

Focusing on South Asian women

Säheli Hub

2. Diversity of activities

Importantly, Säheli Hub organises social clubs, such as ‘tea and toast’ and ‘crochet and chai’ to engage with women who do not feel ready to take part in sport or have a long-term health condition. However, historically, 50% of the women who have attended a social club have taken up a physical activity as “they met somebody like them, somebody who is wearing a hijab like them, someone who’s older like them, someone whose first language isn’t English like them.” They recognise that if she can do it, I can do it.

3. Health programmes and early interventions

Säheli Hub provides a wide range of wrap-around support and early intervention for the most vulnerable women in their communities, with culturally sensitive approaches around diabetes, cardiovascular disease and obesity – supporting them to manage their long-term health conditions. They help women with training and development, building confidence, giving them the skills and knowledge they need, and tackling isolation and low mental health in their communities so they are in a better position to join and enjoy the benefits of physical activity and sport.

Acknowledgements

Säheli Hub has been grateful to receive funding for this work from Sport England via the Birmingham & Solihull Local Delivery Pilot – in partnership with The Active Wellbeing Society, Birmingham City Council and Solihull Council – to create innovative solutions to make it easier for people to access social and physical activity.

“Provision needs to be local and culturally sensitive to the needs of that community. If you want people to participate, it must be free, it must be local, there must be women-only provision as and where needed, and your team should be representative of the community – if we are to make an impact on long-term health inequalities and the representation of diverse/South Asian women in physical activity and sport.”

Naseem Akhtar BEM, founder of Säheli Hub



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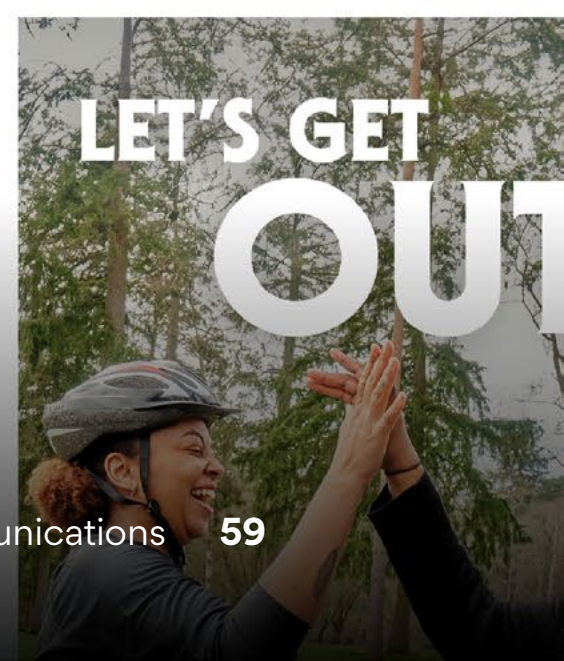
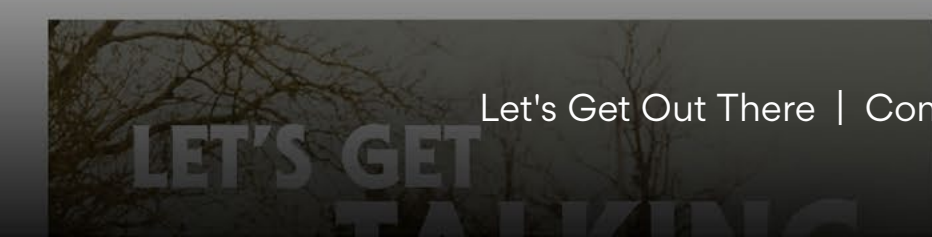
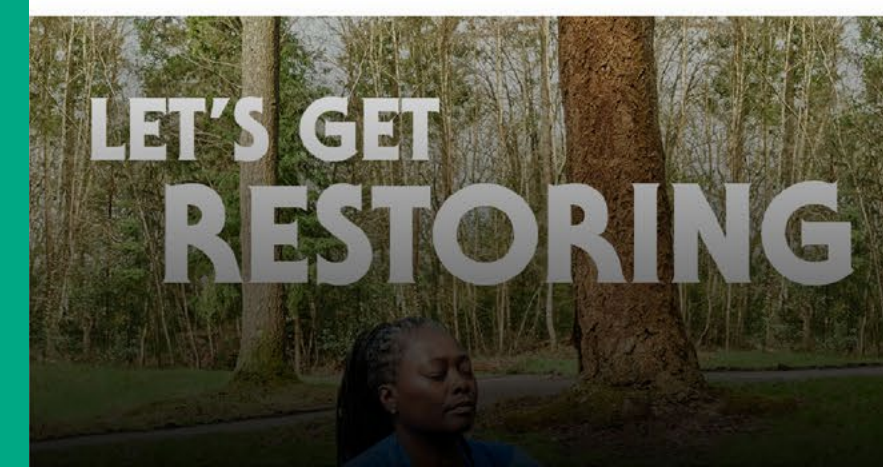
Let's Get Out There campaign templates and materials

Introducing the campaign

We've developed Let's Get Out There as our campaign platform to help inspire more women to get active in outside spaces and highlight the benefits of doing so. As part of the campaign we have created a set of resources that show women getting active in a range of different spaces. The resources are intended to inspire our audience by showing there's something to suit everyone and that there's no right or wrong way to get active.

Our assets are free to use and have been designed to work as standalone content or complement your existing communications. You could also use them alongside key calendar moments, such as Stress Awareness Month (April), Mental Health Awareness Week (May), or World Mental Health Day (October), to emphasise the positive impact of nature and physical activity on wellbeing.

The assets are This Girl Can branded and use the trusted tone of voice and well-known look and feel of the brand, helping you to speak to new audiences. We have also provided asset templates that allow you to co-brand and add your own logo or imagery to help promote a specific space or activity in association with Let's Get Out There.





Assets

Social media assets

We have a variety of different social media assets available in a range of formats, to share with your audiences on your channels. These are both animated and static and come as grid posts (1x1) or stories format (9x16).

Editable assets

We have created a poster and social media template, to allow you to add your own logo and imagery to create your own assets and showcase your local spaces or activities. These asset templates come with a guide that includes instructions on how to edit and download the final file.

Download all assets, templates, guidance and photography [here](#).

Campaign photo library

We have a range of photography that you can use within your communications. The photographs show both urban and rural spaces and a range of activities, such as walking, cycling, yoga and running.

5.0

Evaluation – measuring your impact and sharing your results

Measuring the impact you're making

As part of your work to make your outdoor activities more inclusive, it can be useful to keep track of your progress by gathering data. This could help inform future planning, or enable you to pass on learnings to other parts of your organisation or other groups you may work with.

Quantitative data – this could be simply recording how many people:

- interacted with a social media post
- opened an email
- attended an event or session

Qualitative data – this is where you ask people to give you their individual opinion, for example by asking what they enjoyed most about an activity, or whether there's anything they'd like to see change. You could gather qualitative data via a survey, either on paper or digitally, or by simply chatting to participants.

If you're collecting data from people who can be identified, remember to check and follow data protection guidelines.



We'd love to hear what you're doing

Hearing from organisations who have taken part in the campaign, or engaged with the toolkit, helps us make improvements and plan future activity.

We'd love to hear:

- Which parts of the guide you found most useful
- How you've used campaign assets
- What new or refined activities you've planned

Your experiences of delivering these activities

You can share your feedback by emailing us at:
thisgirlcan@sportengland.org

A thank you to our supporters

This campaign marks the start of a collective effort to challenge the barriers women face and ensure they can experience the benefits of getting active outside. In order to develop the campaign, we have worked closely with a number of organisations across the country to understand where there are opportunities to provide meaningful support, identify examples of where things are being done well and think about how we could collaborate to bring the campaign to life and have the biggest impact possible.

We'd like to thank the following organisations for their support and participation:

- Canal & River Trust
- Forestry England
- Ordnance Survey
- National Trust
- YHA
- Sense
- Cycle Sisters
- Black Girls Hike
- Black Girls Do Run
- Muslimah Sports Association
- Sähëli Hub
- Wanderers of Colour

